

Intelligent Design

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Summary: Oneshot: Lasky didn't know if there was some intelligence behind the universe. But looking at the bizarre morphology of the species encompassing the Storm, the CO had to admit that if that intelligence existed, it had just thrown evolution out the window.

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"What on Earth is it?"

"It's a Jackal. What else?"

"you're an idiot."

Lasky doubted that Commander Palmer liked being called an idiot. Indeed, by insulting someone who could break his neck with her pinkie, maybe he was being the bigger idiot of the two. But still, even as the Spartan-IV glared at him, he had no inclination to back down. The Infinity was stranded. They were being attacked by robots of doom, Del Rio was proving to be as ineffectual as always, and to make matters worse, they had Covies to deal with as well. Or the Storm. Slight difference in name, but given the "Jackal" arrayed before him along with the other Covie corpses, the commander was beginning to think that a different name was just the tip of the iceberg.

"Jackals!" Lasky mused, walking around the corpse. "Honestly Commander, are you that unobservant?"

"It was wielding a plasma pistol. It was wielding a point defence gauntlet. It tried to bite me," Palmer said, clearly irritated. "What else would that make it?"

"Oh, I don't know," Lasky said sarcastically. "I always thought that Jackals were bird-like. With beaks and stuff. Not bloody mini T-rexes!"

And there it was. The coup de grace. The fact that this Jackal looked nothing like the Jackals seen since first contact back in '25. That it looked like an overgrown lizard with little, if any resemblance to the Jackals he'd studied since the Covenant first attacked Corbulo Academy.

"A T-rex?" Palmer asked. "I dunnoâ€| looks more like deinonychus to me."

"Nah, it's a velocitator," ventured one of her squad members.

"Velocitator? They were smaller."

"Butâ€|_Jurassic Space Station _said-â€|"

"Ahem."

The Spartan-IVs shut up and faced their commander. As Lasky liked it.

"Your understanding of the Mesozoic is highly commendable," the CO said to the squad. "But focussing on the twenty-sixth century, the fact is that this thing clearly isn't a Jackal."

"But-"

"I said it isn't a Jackal," Lasky said. "It may fight like one, it might bite like one, but unless you can provide an explanation as to how Jackals suddenly changed their morphology over the course of four years, then I'm going to entertain the notion it's a separate species."

"Fine Sir," Palmer said, clearly disagreeing. "But what about the other Covies? The Elites and Grunts?"

"What about them?"

"Wellâ€|they're different too, aren't they? Are we calling _them _separate species?"

Lasky remained silent.

This planet was screwed up. He didn't even know if it _was _a planet, considering how the _Infinity _had been pulled in. But in this screwed up situation, he had to give Palmer credit in acknowledging that the other Covenant species before him were adding a great deal to the screwiness. One case in point was the Grunts, one of their bodies being kicked by Demarco before moving off.

_Must be the FOTUS armour, _Lasky reflected as he headed over to the body. _Seriouslyâ€|what does FOTUS even stand for?_

He currently suspected that it stood for Fist of the Unicorn given the bizarre spike that stuck out of its forehead, but it was best to focus on one piece of insanity at a time. In this case, the Grunt,

beside which both he and Palmer knelt down beside.

"See?" she said. "It's a Grunt. Like any other Grunt."

"â€|you haven't seen many Grunts, have you Commander?"

Palmer remained silent.

"You see, here's the thing about Grunts," Lasky said. "They didn't have sharp teeth sticking out for the galaxy to see. They didn't have scaly arms that makes them look like the cursed offspring of a gÃ°ta. They didn't look likeâ€|well, like this."

The difference wasn't as pronounced as the Jackals, provided the reptiles of Hell were indeed Jackals and not God deciding to say "screw you" to evolution. Yet it was a noticeable difference and to her credit, Palmer seemed to appreciate it as well.

"A sub-species maybe?" she asked. "Genetic engineering?"

"Doubt it. Covies didn't seem to go much into the engineering thing, considering how taken aback they were by the Spartan-Twos. And a sub-species? Maybe. But why haven't we seen them until now?"

Palmer didn't have an answer for that. But if she did, she'd probably use the same one for the Elites. Glancing at one of the hinge-jaws' corpses, Lasky observed how they'd apparently gone the same way as the Grunts, what with their more scaly and reptilian appearance. He hadn't seen that many Elites up close in his life, but still, once you saw one of the split jaws, you didn't forget it.

Maybe the galaxy did have some consciousness behind it. Maybe in the midst of everything else that was happening on this planet, it was trying to throw the humans another curveball. Maybe, for all he knew, the galaxy was going to give humanity a redesign as well.

Lasky shuddered at the thought.

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The idea for this came from the fact that out of all the Storm species, the mgalekgolo are the only ones that 343 hasn't done a bizarre redesign on. Still, this being a satire, I decided it was easier to focus on the species that did undergo a redesign rather than the ones that didn't. Personally, I don't have too big an issue with it, but looking at the kig-yar alone makes me scratch my head and ask "why?" (in-universe explanations aside)._

Oh, and between writing this and posting this we get the Flood, who apparently bonded with las plagas or something. Go figure.

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Update (22/12/2012): Corrected spelling/punctuation errors.

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file.